



WHEATON CITY COUNCIL PLANNING SESSION MINUTES

MAYOR PHILIP J. SUESS

COUNCILMAN MICHAEL BARBIER | COUNCILWOMAN ERICA BRAY-PARKER | COUNCILWOMAN SUZANNE FITCH
COUNCILWOMAN LYNN ROBBINS | COUNCILMAN JOHN RUTLEDGE | COUNCILMAN CHRISTOPHER ZARUBA

WHEATON CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 303 W WESLEY STREET, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60187

Monday, September 14, 2020

1. Call to Order

The Wheaton City Council Planning Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Suess. The following were:

Physically Present:

Mayor Suess
Councilman Barbier
Councilwoman Bray-Parker
Councilwoman Fitch
Councilwoman Robbins
Councilman Rutledge
Councilman Zaruba

City Staff Physically Present:

John Duguay, Assistant City Manager
Jim Kozik, Director of Planning & Economic Development
Susan Bishel, Public Information Officer
Joseph Tebrugge, Director of Engineering

2. Approval of August 24, 2020 and August 31, 2020 Minutes

The Council approved the August 24, 2020 and August 31, 2020 City Council Planning Session minutes.

3. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

4. Downtown Streetscape Lots 3 & 4 – Design Review

Assistant City Manager Duguay stated that the Downtown Streetscape Plan/Phase 4 was proceeding on schedule and the project would be going out to bid in mid-December. He stated that City staff was seeking direction from the Council related to Design Development concepts presented by the City's Downtown Streetscape Project design team consisting of Primera, Design Workshop, and Ethos Architects.

Assistant City Manager Duguay stated that the design team was seeking Council direction on specific project details that include the approval of the reconfiguration of West/Liberty intersection, the selection of a bike canopy structure, approval of lighting for the multi-use canopy structure and Lot 3, the selection of retaining wall material, a decision on incorporating solar power for the multi-use canopy structure, and selection of a final design concept for Lot 4.

Ms. Manisha Kaul of Design Workshop presented the updated design concept for the reconfiguration of the West/Liberty intersection, which allowed for more pedestrian flow. The design included a planter with a seating area and wider sidewalk crossing over the railroad on the west side of West Street, and new benches adjacent to the northeast corner of the intersection.

Mayor Suess requested the design team place the benches on the northeast corner of the intersection to an area farther away from the intersection.

Ms. Kaul reviewed the two proposed options for the bike canopy structure along with detail comparisons including the amount of bike storage, overall dimensions, estimated cost, and additional considerations.

In response to questions from the Council, Ms. Kaul stated that the Upfit structure had a 15-year warranty and the Apex structure had a 5-year warranty. She was unsure whether the warranty also included the mechanical components of the structures.

The majority of the Council requested the design team proceed with the Apex structure for the final bike canopy design option.

Ms. Kaul presented a photometric detail of the lighting for the multi-use canopy structure.

The Council requested the design team proceed with the downlight design option.

Ms. Kaul presented the options for the retaining wall along the Illinois Prairie Path that included a gabion wall structure and a concrete wall structure. She stated that the concrete wall would require more work related to stormwater and would be more costly. The cost for the gabion wall structure was approximately \$25,000 and the concrete wall structure was approximately \$86,000.

In response to questions from the Council, Ms. Kaul stated that the height of wall for either concrete or the gabion wall would be 18" in height. Limestone was the current stone proposed with the gabion wall, but different types of stone could be chosen with differences in cost. The mesh around the gabion wall is primarily made with stainless steel with an approximate 50-year lifespan, and by design, it should not allow rocks to protrude through the mesh. She stated there are instances where a guardrail would need to be integrated with the wall.

The Council requested the design team proceed with the gabion wall element.

Scott Allman of Ethos Workshop Architects reviewed the design aesthetics of the solar option for the multi-use canopy structure. He stated that it would have minimal visual impact as it would be on top of the roof and only be located on the south side of the structure.

Mr. Atif Zaidi of Primera Engineering provided details about the electrical engineering of the solar panels that would allow for 18,000-watt system at an estimated cost of \$48,600. He stated that there are multiple incentives for pricing that could bring the estimated cost lower that have yet to be included with the final overall cost. Mr. Zaidi explained that the solar system could also be fitted with a battery system at an estimated cost of \$22,000 to allow the City to store energy for future usage. Without a battery system, the solar energy gathered would be directed back into the power grid in which ComEd would provide credits to the City based on the amount of energy received.

In response to a Council question, Mr. Zaidi stated that the City would not directly receive tax-credit incentives. He stated that the installers of the system would receive any tax-credit incentives and would apply the cost reductions into the cost of installation.

In response to questions from the Council, Mr. Zaidi stated that batteries would need to be on site within an enclosure. Assistant City Manager Duguay stated that a facility on Lot 3 would be housing the electrical system for the canopy's sprinkler system and the batteries could be housed in the same location.

In response to questions from the Council, Mr. Zaidi stated that the proposed 18,000-watt system is enough power to run the lights at night but may not be efficient for running additional electric items. He recommended that the City use a combination of the battery system and power grid system to allow for more flexibility with usage. He stated that the City would be able to track usage internally over time.

The Council requested the design team proceed with the solar panel option for the multi-use canopy structure.

Ms. Kaul provided two updated design concepts for Lot 4. Both options are less expensive than the original design concept and include more playful elements within the design.

In response to Council questions, Ms. Kaul stated that the original design concept had not changed but had been developed to include additional items and to incorporate more cost-saving elements. She stated that Option A would maximize the amount of seating and would offer the most cost-savings within the space.

The Council requested the design team proceed with Option A for the design concept for Lot 4.

5. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Short-Term Rentals

Director of Planning & Economic Development Kozik provided a summary of proposed changes to the text of Article 2 and Article 24 of the Wheaton Zoning Ordinance based on Council recommendations from September 8, 2020. Assistant City Manager Duguay commented that short-term rentals are currently not allowed in Wheaton and the text amendments would be the first step in allowing them within the City.

Director of Planning & Economic Development Kozik reviewed the proposed revisions to Article 2 – Definitions. The revisions include the exclusion of time constraints and expanding of ways of advertising rentals in the definition of Short-term Home Sharing Rentals, revised text for being present on a property within the definition of Lives on Site, and a simplified definition of Owner.

In response to a Council question, Director of Planning & Economic Development Kozik stated that the term "other means" within the definition was used to describe ways in which people could advertise their rental property apart from a Hosting Platform. He stated that City staff would investigate the possibility of revising the amendment to allow a point-of-contact to be acceptable when an owner is unable to be on site.

Director of Planning & Economic Development Kozik reviewed the proposed revisions to Article 24 - Accessory Uses and Home Occupations. The revisions include changes that permit rooms for boarding use to be leased at a term of greater than 14 days, the removal of the word dwelling in Section 24.10 #11, and the clarification of when rooms are needed to be inspected.

6. City Council/City Staff Comments

Councilwoman Bray-Parker expressed her excitement for the City ranking first in response rates among Illinois communities with a population greater than 50,000 for the U.S. Census.

Mayor Suess recognized the Fire and Police Department for their efforts for the September 11 virtual ceremony and asked the community to remember that the City had lost people in the terrorist attack.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel J. Peck